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Arizona Department of Education Assessment Section

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Latest News

This summer the Assessment Division of the Arizona Department of Education brought together teacher leaders and content experts to participate in an item development project designed to create a bank of sample PARCC like items for Arizona educators. The Item Writing group looked at the task models and evidence statements and created potential questions in ELA/Literacy and Math.

The charge for the Content and Bias Review group was to evaluate these items written as sample assessment items of the Common



Core Standards. In addition to looking for questions or passages that might disadvantage

any population or contain any subject matter that is not supported by the Common Core Standards, the group also looked at variance, validity, and fairness in each test item.

Items will be reviewed again and published as task prototypes on the



ADE PARCC Assessment website. The item and task prototypes were developed primarily for the purposes of communications and training. They are not test samplers, and are not meant to mirror full-length assessments. Because the prototypes have been developed and selected to illustrate shifts in the CCCS, they may not appear exactly in this form on actual PARCC assessments.

PARCC Around the State

'Partnership, Celebration, and Reflection', was the theme for the 2013 Arizona Department of Education **Leading Change Conference** June 25 – 27.

The conference provided meaningful professional development in areas such as technology, Common Core Standards implementation, and the transition to PARCC.

Some of the PARCC presentations included:

PARCC Policies: An Overview and Updates, Assessment Transition and Design, and Will Your ELLs be Ready for PARCC?

The AZ PARCC Assessment team also presented information to a variety of groups during the

summer Assessment Summits in Prescott and Vail. These presentations included:

- *Assessing Literacy in the Classrooms*
- *Assessing Literacy in the Content Areas*
- *Determining Text Complexity for Elementary and High School.*
- *A Trip to the PARCC*



To view these presentations, visit us at the following ADE websites:

- [Assessment Summit](#)
- [Arizona PARCC at Leading Change Conference](#)



"The opportunity to participate in this process is greatly appreciated. All teachers can benefit from this experience to better understand the changes in assessment design and instructional implication."

—Content and Bias Review Committee member



Educators and content experts review items at the Content and Bias Review Committee.

The Director's Chair

"The only way to make a sense out of change is to plunge into it, move with it, and join the dance."—Alan Watts



Welcome to the inaugural issue of **PARCC Place**, which is designed to provide educators with regular updates and information related to the upcoming PARCC assessment.

There is so much going on right now as we prepare for the first operational year in 2014-2015! The first phase of PARCC item development wraps up in August and then work will begin on phase two item development. PARCC recently released the first edition of the PARCC Accommodations Manual. Several new sample items will be released in August. Field testing is scheduled for spring of 2014. Lots of progress is being made.

Here in Arizona we brought together over 80

educators in June to write PARCC-like performance based assessment sample items. In July, several educators returned to begin reviewing these items. We are looking forward to pulling together more educators in the next two or three months to continue reviewing the items so that we can get them ready to publish on the ADE website. We are hoping that these items and item sets will help educators and students become familiar with the types of questions that will be asked on the PARCC assessment.

We are also updating the PARCC section of the ADE website and will be adding several narrated power points covering a variety of topics related to PARCC.

We are here to support you. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Have a great school year!

Wendi Anderson, M.Ed.

Director for PARCC/Innovative Assessment

Focus on FAQs

Q. What can districts and schools do to help get ready to administer the tests online?

A. Did you know that the **Technology Readiness Tool (TRT)** supports schools' planning as they transition to the Common Core Standards and PARCC Assessment? This tool provides a way to report minimum and recommended specifications for computer hardware, devices, and suggested security levels and bandwidth to support instructional and assessment needs.

Q. Why is it important to collect and update your data using this tool?

The TRT tool will support schools and districts in implementing a 21st Century Education.

Your data will be counted in the aggregate data about technology readiness in the

US will help drive funding considerations at the local, state and national level.

This tool will help your site evaluate instructional and testing considerations for network infrastructure and devices.

The TRT will help you determine and plan the length of the testing window at each site.

This tool will help you identify any technology needs you may have and it will help determine the need for philanthropic partnerships.

Completing this tool will help you in controlling or reducing costs as you look at your investment in technology.

Please check that you have completed the Technology Readiness Tool! You can find more information on the [Assessment website](#).

Focus on FAQs—continued

Q. What is the Capacity Planning Tool and how will it help us?

A. The PARCC Capacity Planning Tool is an Excel spreadsheet that allows schools to model different levels of testing windows, devices, simultaneous test-takers by grade level, and bandwidth demands, and to check their current and planned strategies.

Using data from the TRT and adding network utilization data points, the spreadsheet will produce a variety of “what if” examples. This is a powerful planning tool that also includes a small elementary example as well as a large high school example.

As assessment development progresses, PARCC will continue to issue increasingly detailed guidance and online tools to help schools evaluate and prepare their assessment technology infrastructure. As available, further information will be posted to the parcconline.org/technology page.



“I always enjoy these committees because I learn the most when I write assessments. It’s valuable to me to have state people with expertise and to work with people from different backgrounds and experiences. I feel like the Department of Education is always trying to help teachers with their craft.”

—Item Development Committee member

Classroom Resources for K-12 Standards and PARCC

K-12 Standards: We’re Here to Help

The K-12 Academic Standards section provides professional development, instructional resources, and information to support the development and implementation of Arizona’s Common Core Standards in Mathematics and English Language Arts and Literacy in History, Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects, in addition to the K-12 academic standards in science, social studies, and educational technology.

From our website you can access our full schedule of professional development opportunities (face-to-face, online, and free webinar options available), connect with one of five regional centers, and access our Educator Toolbox (a compilation of support resources to assist educators with the implementation process). You can also find information on all of Arizona’s standards, an implementation timeline, and contact information for the ADE K-12 Academic Standards staff. Get connected today: <http://www.azed.gov/standards-practices/>.

Professional development opportunities, including webinars, can be found at www.azed.gov/azcommoncore/pd.

Sign up for information about K-12 Standards at <http://tinyurl.com/keub7n7>

PARCC Resources

Are you looking for resources to assess the Common Core Standards or PARCC Item Samples to support your teaching of the standards? PARCC assessments will be tightly aligned to the Common Core State Standards and grounded in the key shifts at the heart of the Common Core State Standards.

For more information and resources, visit the PARCC website at www.parcconline.org

PARCC Item and Task Prototypes

PARCC provides sample tasks and items that can be used during the transition to the Common Core Standards and PARCC. More items will be released in August and later in the fall; PARCC-like items written by Arizona teachers will be available sometime this fall.

PARCC Assessment Blueprints

PARCC has released a set of test specification documents to help educators, parents, and the general public better understand the design of the PARCC assessments.

<http://parcconline.org/samples/item-task-prototypes>

<http://parcconline.org/assessment-blueprints-test-specs>



Content and Bias Review Committee Meeting, July 2013

P A R C C

PARCC Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual Released

The [*PARCC Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual*](#) is a comprehensive policy document that outlines the accessibility features and accommodations that will be available for the PARCC Mid-Year, Performance-Based, and End-of-Year Assessments.

In addition to the proposed participation and accommodations policies for students with disabilities and English learners, there is also information about tools that will be provided through PARCC's computer-based assessment delivery system for *all* students.

PARCC also released online brochures called *Expanding Access* for [parents](#) and [teachers](#) of students with disabilities to explain the PARCC assessment and the accessibility system.

Sign Up to Receive AZ - PARCC Communications

Arizona is actively engaged, as part of the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), in the development of our new assessment system, which will measure student progress toward developing the skills called for in our 2010 adopted standards.

For more information about the transition to PARCC and the progress being made on the assessment, please click on the PARCC button located on the right hand side of the page. If you currently receive our communications, please encourage your friends and colleagues to sign up!



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